

To: Holdsworth, Susan[Holdsworth.Susan@epa.gov]
Cc: Behl, Betsy[Behl.Betsy@epa.gov]; Bergman, Ronald[Bergman.Ronald@epa.gov]; Lopez-Carbo, Maria[Lopez-Carbo.Maria@epa.gov]
From: Grevatt, Peter
Sent: Tue 1/28/2014 10:42:00 PM
Subject: RE: CCL, algal toxin and point of contact

At this point, I would suggest Ron Bergman and Betsy Behl. They will assign to others, but I want to make sure they have the ability to put their right folks in touch with yours. Thanks, P.G.

From: Holdsworth, Susan
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 4:52 PM
To: Grevatt, Peter
Subject: CCL, algal toxin and point of contact

Hi Peter,

I've forgotten the name of the person you suggested I contact to share data and information we've gleaned from the surveys. After seeing the news on OGWDW including algal toxins in the CCL, Amina Pollard asked about finding an opportunity to meet.

Thanks,

Susan

Susan Holdsworth

Monitoring Branch Chief

EPA Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds

202-566-1187

Holdsworth.Susan@epa.gov

From: Lehmann, Sarah
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 1:00 PM

To: Pollard, Amina; Holdsworth, Susan
Subject: RE: FYI Only: Water articles in the Press

Great idea. Susa, do you have a contact in OGWDW we could reach out to? Unfortunately, I don't have a lot of ties in that office.

Sarah Lehmann

202-566-1379

Lehmann.sarah@epa.gov

From: Pollard, Amina
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 11:58 AM
To: Lehmann, Sarah
Subject: FW: FYI Only: Water articles in the Press

These folks might be interested in hearing about NLA results...

Amina

From: Bravo, Antonio
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 11:32 AM
To: OW-OWOW-EVERYONE
Subject: FYI Only: Water articles in the Press

Daily News

EPA To Assess Algal Toxins In Forthcoming SDWA Regulatory Review

Posted: January 21, 2014

EPA is planning to include an assessment of toxins from algal blooms in a forthcoming review required by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) as part of its ongoing efforts to address nutrient pollution concerns through the SDWA, potentially imposing additional regulatory requirements on nutrients.

In a December 2013 presentation at the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC), Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW) officials announced that the agency will evaluate algal toxins for regulatory determinations and include them in the next version of the unregulated contaminant monitoring rule (UCMR), known as UCMR4. EPA is slated to begin preliminary stakeholder meetings on the rule early this year.

The UCMR program requires EPA, under the SDWA, to monitor no more than 30 unregulated contaminants every five years. EPA uses the collected data in concert with the contaminant candidate list (CCL) to determine whether to regulate a pollutant in the interest of protecting public health.

EPA has included three algal toxins in its current CCL, known as CCL3 -- anatoxin-a, microcystin-LR and cylindrospermopsin -- and the inclusion of algal toxins in the next UCMR signals EPA's willingness to incorporate nutrient protections into drinking water regulations.

As part of the regulatory determination process, EPA will evaluate whether algal toxins have an adverse effect on human health, occur in public water systems with a frequency and at levels of public health concern, and whether regulation presents a meaningful opportunity for health risk reduction for persons served by public water systems.

Algal blooms, a type of cyanobacteria, are toxin-producing blooms that occur in drinking water supplies and are said to have possible severe impacts on human health and aquatic ecosystems. According to National Environmental Science Strategy research cited by NDWAC, it is currently unclear whether the public is being routinely exposed to low levels of the toxins in drinking or recreational waters, nor is it known what the long-term health effects of the exposures could be.

The inclusion of the toxins in the UCMR4 underscores EPA's growing interest in addressing nutrient pollution through the SDWA in addition to the Clean Water Act (CWA), and urge for greater "synergy" between wastewater and drinking water statutes overall. EPA officials have previously urged NDWAC to back other nutrient control efforts, such as its numeric water quality criteria in Florida waters, and have pushed to use their CWA programs in order to help clean up drinking water sources.

OGWDW's Eric Burneson said at the December NDWAC meeting that predicting when algal blooms occur might be one challenge of the UCMR4, as the standard format for UCMR is quarterly samples, and it could be tricky to predict when the algal blooms might occur based on the quarterly system.

Algal blooms form in both marine and fresh water under conditions such as light availability, warm weather, low turbulence and high levels of nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorous that result in rapid growth or "blooms" of algae. Toxic contamination risk increases when blooms are formed. Efforts to study harmful algal blooms have thus far focused mostly on the Great Lakes region. In 2011 acting EPA water chief Nancy Stoner told Congress in testimony that Ohio's large drinking water supply -- as well as small, marine-based businesses and tourism -- had suffered from harmful algal blooms caused by increased loads of nitrogen and phosphorous.

"Nutrient pollution is having significant impacts on our nation's economies and the health of our communities," Stoner told a congressional panel, adding that many small businesses in Ohio are now eligible for low-interest disaster loans due to harmful algal blooms, and that its Department of Health has warned community residents and visitors against using the lake because of the tendency for the algal blooms to produce toxins. Stoner also emphasized in her testimony EPA's commitment to supporting states -- saying that the agency had issued a directive to its regional offices "making it clear that reducing nitrogen and phosphorous pollution is best addressed by catalyzing and supporting actions by states, relying on a range of regulatory and nonregulatory tools, including proven conservation practices."

The agency plans to have a new stakeholder meeting on the UCMR4 sometime early this year and will work toward a rule in mid-2015, with a final UCMR4 in 2016. -- *Amanda Palleschi*

The Inside Story

Alaska Senator Opposes Pebble Mine

Posted: January 22, 2014

As he gears up for a tough re-election battle, Sen. Mark Begich (D-AK) is opposing the planned Pebble Mine in his home state, citing EPA's study detailing significant potential risks the mine poses to the Bristol Bay watershed and the salmon fishery it supports, with the senator saying "years of scientific study" show the mine "cannot be developed safely."

"As the multi-year watershed assessment details, the mine would likely threaten the largest and most lucrative salmon run in the world," Begich says in a statement from his office.

In an interview with the [Anchorage Daily News](#) posted Jan. 19, he added the mine poses "too many potential long-term impacts to a fishery that is pretty critical to that area but also to Alaska, to world markets."

According to the newspaper, Begich said he isn't calling on EPA to preemptively veto the mine. Even so, his comments in opposition to the project echo former Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AK), Begich's 2008 opponent, who called the project "the wrong mine for the wrong place."

Begich is one of several incumbent Democrats that Republicans are targeting as the party looks to retake control of the Senate in the 2014 midterm elections. He faces several potential GOP challengers, including Lt. Gov. Mead Treadwell and Joe Miller, a Tea Party favorite who won a Republican primary against Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) in 2010 but lost to her in the general election when she waged a write-in bid.

While there is local support for Begich's stance on the planned mine, it is nevertheless surprising as he is seeking to distance himself from Obama administration actions and Democratic policy positions. [CNN noted](#) recently that Begich "is already trying to dissociate himself from the Democratic Party with the self-defining tagline: 'As independent as Alaska.'"

Begich's opposition to the mine comes after EPA Jan. 15 released its [controversial study](#), which estimated that between 24 and 94 miles of streams, and between 2 and 8 square-miles of wetlands, would be destroyed by the mine footprint, depending on its size. It also warned of potential failings at a mine tailings storage facility and wastewater treatment facility. The watershed, the study notes, produces nearly half of the world's wild sockeye salmon.

Following its release, Region X Administrator Dennis McLerran said the agency will now respond to a request by environmentalists and tribes to take the novel step of preemptively vetoing the mine using section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act, a step EPA has not previously taken, though he set no timeline for any decision.

McLerran called the request a "big decision" for the agency and said EPA would consider several options, including opting not to exercise preemptive veto authority and waiting for a permit application to be filed.

But regardless of how the issue plays in the upcoming election, Begich may not face a test over whether EPA preemptively vetoes the project, as the industry consortium that is seeking to develop the mine is [struggling to retain backers](#) and has not yet sought a permit.

The other members of Alaska's congressional delegation, Murkowski and Rep. Don Young (R), criticized EPA's study, fearing it will form the basis of a preemptive veto.

Daily News

Power Sector Seeks Host Of Late Changes To Delayed Cooling Water Rule

Posted: January 23, 2014

EPA has made a series of changes to its pending cooling water intake rule that are winning praise from the electric utility industry for relaxing some earlier requirements, though the industry officials are calling on the administration to make a series of additional changes as the agency works to complete the delayed rulemaking in the coming months.

A pair of recent letters from members of the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) suggest that EPA will move forward with a rule continuing a state-based permitting regime for determining best technology available (BTA) for cooling water intakes at power plants and other industrial facilities, as outlined in the 2011 proposed rule, though that approach is opposed by environmentalists seeking a strict national standard and could trigger a lawsuit.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) section 316(b) rule, which EPA proposed in 2011, generally sets a flexible, site-specific standard for reducing the entrainment of fish eggs and larvae into cooling water systems but sets a strict nationwide standard for reducing the impingement of live adult fish on the structures.

EEI's letters -- one sent Sept. 17, the other Dec. 20 -- indicate that the agency has recently softened several of the proposed rule's provisions. For example, the letters indicate that EPA plans to drop the use of its controversial willingness to pay (WTP) surveys quantifying the rule's non-use benefits to justify the rulemaking, though it's unclear if or how they could be used for individual permits.

Additionally, the December letter suggests that EPA will require cost-benefit reviews when states make BTA determinations, a "positive step" EEI requested in September after EPA considered making such studies optional.

The agency has also adopted less stringent "impingement" requirements for so-called "peaker" units, though the industry group is now calling on EPA to adopt similar measures to prevent "entrainment."

And EPA appears to have dropped an earlier provision requiring states to coordinate with the Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service, collectively known as the services, regarding Endangered Species Act (ESA) issues for site-specific permits, though sources say other ESA concerns could be a reason for the rule's delay.

But the letter also indicates several industry concerns remain outstanding as EPA prepares to issue a final rule, including the threshold at which facilities are considered "new" and thus subject to costly closed-cycle cooling upgrades, proposed exemptions for cooling ponds from CWA jurisdiction and proposed flexible permit application deadlines.

The industry group is also urging EPA to limit planned requirements to monitor for potential impacts to endangered species to only those species directly impacted by the intake structure, rather than requiring monitoring for species indirectly impacted by the intake. EEI says the formal species act consultation EPA is conducting with the services could also potentially impose additional requirements on facilities deemed to have a *de minimis* environmental impact.

The group says the *de minimis* language "includes a broad, generalized application of the ESA in a fashion that would render the language meaningless" because it could prohibit a facility from qualifying if a listed species "may be present in the area"

The group sent the Dec. 20 letter after a Dec. 17 meeting between several utility executives and top administration officials, including Ken Kopocis, nominated to lead EPA's water office; Howard Shelanski, head of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs; Dan Utech, President Obama's climate and energy adviser; and Gary Guzy, who has since stepped down as deputy director of the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

New Deadline

The letters come as EPA is currently in talks with environmentalists over a new deadline to issue the final 316(b) rule after it missed its Jan. 14 deadline in a legally binding consent decree, the latest in a series of missed deadlines.

The group Riverkeeper has agreed not to reopen the suit that forced the deadline until Jan. 28 to allow EPA time to propose a new deadline. However, Riverkeeper attorney Reed Super says in a Jan. 15 letter that plaintiffs are "deeply troubled by EPA's continued delays in finalizing the Section 316(b) rulemaking and have serious reservations about agreeing to a further extension of any significant duration."

Environmentalists have been pushing for stringent plant overhauls in the rule such as closed-cycle retrofits that would dramatically reduce water withdrawals and as a result reduce the the amount of fish killed by being entrained into cooling systems or impinging against intake structures.

But many in the power sector and other industries are concerned that complying with the rule will add significant new regulatory costs. While EPA has already pledged to provide significant compliance flexibilities, industry has called on EPA to allow for alternative technologies, such as upgraded screens, barrier nets or reduced intake velocity, that would meet the rule's fish safety requirements but cost far less than retrofitting plants with cooling towers.

Industry groups have been especially concerned over EPA's use of WTP surveys, which attempt to quantify the benefits of preventing the cooling water-related deaths of aquatic life known as "forage fish" that are not caught for commercial or recreational purposes. They feared preliminary results EPA offered in 2012 of one national and four regional surveys could help justify stricter controls.

But in the [September letter](#), EEI says, "We understand EPA will not rely on its national and regional stated preference survey results to justify the rulemaking." That specific issue is not mentioned in the December letter, suggesting it has been resolved.

Still, the industry group in both letters warns that WTP surveys -- which they argue are not statistically sound and can show inflated benefits -- should not be used for individual permitting decisions. "[T]here remain certain concerns regarding the continued reference to and endorsement of the use of WTP surveys on an individual permit basis despite significant, demonstrable problems with the use of such surveys," the Dec. 20 letter says, calling on EPA to "moderate" the language regarding non-use benefits to make it clear that states are not required to conduct a WTP survey when considering a permit.

Such a provision, the group says, could acknowledge the limitations of such surveys or endorse qualitative descriptions of non-use benefits. They also urge EPA to clearly state that a permit application will not be deemed "inadequate" -- and thus require closed-cycle cooling -- if a facility does not conduct a WTP survey.

EPA appears receptive to that concern. At a Nov. 14 congressional hearing, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy testified that the survey was "appropriate on a national level to get a handle of people's willingness to pay for the types of improvements that these technologies would bring," though she added that the agency does not "expect that to be the way in which states and permittees make case-by-case decisions."

Species Impacts

The agency may have less discretion in how it responds to the services' concerns about potential endangered species impacts. For example, the Dec. 20 letter says that "it is our understanding that in response to the ESA consultation, the rule could require permittees to provide vastly expanded information to permitting authorities on the potential for direct and indirect impacts to threatened and endangered species."

The group adds: "Trying to address species that may be in the area, but have no risk of being impinged or indirectly affected, and are potential prey of a listed species is much broader than the current ESA applications in the [cooling water] permitting process."

EEI suggests that the services, in a pending biological opinion to be released alongside the final rule, find the rule "not likely to adversely affect" listed species, and that monitoring and study requirements be limited to those species directly affected by a cooling water intake.

Industry is also urging EPA to revert to a provision in the 2011 proposed rule excluding all "repowered, rebuilt or replaced" units from being deemed a "new" unit, a key finding that would trigger a mandatory requirement to install expensive closed-cycle cooling towers.

The "most recent iteration" of the rule, the group says in its December letter, will spur such a finding if the turbine and condenser are replaced and the location of the cooling water intake structure is changed.

But the group urges EPA to go even further and exempt all "repowered, rebuilt or replaced" units from stricter requirements. "Closed-cycle cooling is not BTA for modified units for the same reasons -- land constraints, reliability impacts, non-water quality environmental impacts, etc. -- closed-cycle cooling is not BTA for new units," the group says.

Peaker Units

EPA also appears to have made a slight change to the rule's standards for "peaker" units that are used during periods of high electricity demand. In the December letter, EEI says the revised rule will allow less stringent requirements for such units regarding the impingement of fish against intake screens.

But the group urges the agency to also apply the provision to entrainment, when fish eggs and larvae are sucked into intake systems. Such units are infrequently used, the group says, and "additional operational costs (such as installation of impingement and entrainment reduction technologies) could make these units uneconomic and would force closure, thus defeating the reliability purpose they serve."

Both letters also raise concerns about a provision in the rule that could put cooling ponds related to closed-cycle systems in jeopardy as a 316(b) compliance technology if they are designated as a "water of the United States" (WOUS). "[W]e recommend that EPA specify that cooling ponds or impoundments lawfully created principally to serve as part of a closed-cycle system can continue to serve that purpose and will satisfy section 316(b) for both impingement and entrainment," the December letter says.

"Requiring that their status as a compliance technology hinge on their jurisdictional status as WOUS is wholly inconsistent" with the 1979 rule defining WOUS, "which **explicitly** acknowledged that an impoundment could function as a compliance technology even if classified as a WOUS."

According to the September letter, EPA had floated the idea of a rule that precludes impoundments deemed a WOUS from qualifying as part of a closed-cycle system as long as the agency promises that it will not use the rule or the pending CWA jurisdiction rule to "change the status quo as to the current exemption for waste treatment systems."

EEI says that such a move would not satisfy their concerns because some EPA regions have not applied the waste treatment exemption consistently. In the December letter, the group says, "We remain very concerned that EPA has not resolved this issue according to established legal and regulatory precedent."

Finally, the December letter urges EPA to institute a series of "reasonable" permit application deadlines. Such a provision would provide at least five years for all facilities to complete the application process, allow facilities to identify impingement control technologies compatible with entrainment technologies, and authorize permit writers to "adjust permit application deadlines for cause, regardless of the expiration date of the facility's current [cooling water] permit." -- *Lee Logan*

Daily News

As Court Weighs Suit, Industry Fears EPA Stormwater Permit Limits 'Shield'

Posted: January 22, 2014

As a federal appellate court weighs whether dischargers covered by general permits are protected from citizen suits by the Clean Water Act's (CWA) "permit shield," mining and other industry groups are raising concerns that EPA's proposed general permit for stormwater discharges from industrial sites may not provide them with an adequate shield.

In recent comments on EPA's draft multi-sector general permit (MSGP) for industrial stormwater, industry groups charge that the proposed update would drastically weaken the CWA shield for covered entities by denying them any protection for discharges not specifically authorized by the permit.

EPA's proposed revision would "improperly narrow the scope of [the CWA's] permit shield protection and thus, EPA should remove them from the MSGP," the National Mining Association (NMA) says in [Dec. 23 comments](#).

Courts have long upheld that CWA permittees are shielded from liability for otherwise unlawful discharges if they can show they comply with the terms and limits outlined in a lawfully issued permit. But among other modifications in its draft MSGP, released for public comment Sept. 27, the agency is proposing to add a clause stating that dischargers are liable for "[a]ny discharges not

expressly authorized under this permit."

The timing of the agency's proposal could be significant because it comes as industry is defending against a closely-watched citizen suit that would create a similar restriction for all general permits, regardless of whether regulators choose to add a restriction like the one in the MSGP.

In *Sierra Club v. ICG Hazard*, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit is considering whether dischargers that operate under a general permit are covered by the permit shield when they discharge pollutants not addressed by their permit terms.

Key to that case is the fact that EPA has not issued formal guidance on how the shield applies to general permits in the years since the 2001 landmark appellate case *Piney Run Preservation Association v. County Commissioners of Carroll County, MD*, established permit shield protections for discharges not addressed by the terms of an individual permit.

Although EPA issued guidance on the topic years before the ruling in that case, "How do we know that the EPA still thinks that has anything whatever to do with this situation?" Circuit Judge Julia Smith Gibbons asked during Oct. 8 oral arguments in *Sierra Club*.

In both comments on the MSGP and arguments before the 6th Circuit, industry has argued that narrowing the shield for general permits could lead to a host of citizen suits against industrial facilities for discharges that operators cannot entirely predict or prevent. For instance, during oral arguments in *Sierra Club*, attorney Robert McLusky said "a general permit would provide virtually no protection" under a ruling narrowing the shield.

And quoting the 2nd Circuit's 1994 ruling in *Atlantic States Legal Foundation, Inc. v. Eastman Kodak*, NMA argues in its MSGP comments that "'it is impossible to identify and rationally limit every chemical or compound present in a discharge of pollutants.' Indeed, 'compliance with such a permit would be impossible and anybody seeking to harass a permittee need only analyze that permittee's discharge until determining the presence of a substance not identified in the permit.'"

Beyond adding liability for unpermitted discharges, industry groups claim in their MSGP comments that EPA's proposed permit-shield clause, as written, would risk completely denying MSGP coverage to facilities that make unpermitted discharges, rather than requiring them to seek separate permit coverage for whatever discharges fall outside the terms of the general permit.

"This requirement could be interpreted such that any mixing of industrial stormwater with any non-stormwater not otherwise listed in the permit removes or somehow vitiates the coverage for the permitted industrial stormwater discharge in that combined discharge. In other words, not only is the non-stormwater portion not covered by the MSGP (logical solution), but the implication is that the MSGP-covered part of that combined discharge somehow also loses its MSGP protection (illogical solution)," the Associated General Contractors of America argues in Dec. 23 comments.

Under the CWA, EPA and states generally require industrial facilities to obtain permit coverage for their stormwater runoff, either through individual permitting or a general permit like the MSGP -- permits which typically require the facility to make regular reports on its stormwater discharges and to develop and submit a mitigation plan for review.

The MSGP directly regulates facilities in states where EPA is the permitting authority and serves as a model elsewhere -- though some states, such as California, have declined to base their permits on EPA's.


In addition to the permit-shield issue, both industry and the Department of Defense are arguing that a clause added to the draft permit could effectively prevent any facility near a Superfund site from qualifying for coverage.



















EPA is proposing in the draft to forbid any facility that "discharges to" a federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation & Liability Act (CERCLA) site from seeking MSGP coverage, "unless the applicable EPA Regional Office is first notified and has determined that the facility is eligible for permit coverage."

But comments from industry groups and the Navy claim that it is nearly impossible to guarantee that a facility near a Superfund site does not discharge at least part of its stormwater to that site, even if there is no direct link between the two.

"[T]he practical impacts of the proposed part . . . could be staggering. Depending on how EPA Regional Offices exercise their discretion, this provision would effectively suspend application of the MSGP in any of the [CERCLA] sites' upstream watersheds during the time EPA personnel conduct their site-specific reviews," NMA says in its comments.

And the Navy says in [Dec. 18 comments](#) that "the provision may significantly decrease federal agency use [and] benefits of the general permit," because it defines "federal CERCLA site" so broadly "that every federal agency cleanup site could be included." -- [David LaRoss \(dlaross@iwpnews.com\)](#)

Cantwell asks Obama to limit mining in Bristol Bay 01/24/2014 Seattle Post-Intelligencer WA 

	Proposed fracking in national forest meets broad opposition	01/24/2014	Miami Herald - Online, The	FL	
	A call for toxic algae guidelines	01/23/2014	Toledo Blade - Online	OH	
	Begich speaks out against proposed Pebble Mine	01/23/2014	Seattle Post-Intelligencer	WA	
	Critics doubt value of International Space Station science	01/23/2014	Orlando Sentinel - Online	FL	
	Farmers Press Agribusiness Giants for Data Security	01/23/2014	Bloomberg Businessweek - Online	NY	
	Fishermen, chefs, Cantwell tell Obama: Kill Bristol Bay mine	01/23/2014	Seattle Post-Intelligencer	WA	
	N.J. waterways need protection from overdevelopment	01/23/2014	Asbury Park Press - Online	NJ	
	Washington senator, chefs protest proposed Pebble Mine	01/23/2014	Miami Herald - Online, The	FL	
	Waste still seeps into	01/23/2014	State - Online, The	SC	

**pollution-
plagued creek**

Opponents of 01/23/2014 NorthJersey.co NJ
reservoir plan m
fault utility for
operating
behind closed
doors



	Proposed fracking in national forest meets broad opposition	01/23/2014	Chicago Tribune - Online	IL	
	Alaska Senator: Bristol Bay mine would "harm the salmon"	01/22/2014	Seattle Post-Intelligencer	WA	
	BRISTOL BAY: Ad compares mine to war	01/22/2014	E&E News PM	DC	
	Group plans ads thanking Begich for Pebble stance	01/22/2014	Anchorage Daily News - Online	AK	
	Pressure on Pebble intensifies amid praise for Begich	01/22/2014	Anchorage Daily News - Online	AK	
	Scott pledges \$130M to Everglades restoration	01/22/2014	Miami Herald - Online, The	FL	
	Tips to Help Kids Form Healthy Dental Habits	01/22/2014	Capital - Online, The	MD	

News Headline: Cantwell asks Obama to limit mining in Bristol Bay |

Outlet Full Name: Seattle Post-Intelligencer

News Text: SEATTLE (AP) — U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell is asking President Barack Obama to take

action to restrict or prohibit the development of large-scale mining in the Bristol Bay watershed.

In a letter sent Thursday, Cantwell asked the Obama administration to invoke a rarely used veto authority under the federal Clean Water Act to protect the region in southwest Alaska that is home to the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery.

The Democratic senator from Washington state wrote that the science shows Pebble Mine poses a direct threat to Bristol Bay salmon, maritime jobs and Alaska Native people. She also said thousands of jobs in Washington are tied to Bristol Bay salmon fishing.

Cantwell, dozens of fishermen and others rallied against the proposed Pebble Mine Thursday at Fishermen's Terminal in Seattle.

"That's why we're sending a letter today to President Obama asking him and his administration to follow the science and do everything possible to make sure that we protect these Northwest jobs," Cantwell said. "We want to do one thing, and that is save our fishing jobs."

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released a report last week concluding that large-scale mining in the Bristol Bay watershed poses significant risks to salmon.



Pebble Limited Partnership spokesman Mike Heatwole said in an email Thursday that Cantwell's request "flies in the face of due process."

Heatwole also criticized the EPA document as "not conclusive science but rather a political report intended to harm our project's ability to apply for permits and receive an objective review under the environmental laws of our country."

Critics have expressed concerns that the EPA report could be used to pre-emptively veto the project and would set a bad precedent.

Under section 404c of the Clean Water Act, the EPA has the authority to restrict, prohibit, deny or withdraw use of an area as a disposal site for dredged or fill material if the discharge would have "unacceptable adverse" effects on things like municipal water supplies or fisheries, according to an EPA fact sheet. The agency says it has issued just over a dozen final veto actions since 1972.

Heatwole has said there is a process that exists for evaluating a project, and there is no environmental

News Headline: Proposed fracking in national forest meets broad opposition |  

Outlet Full Name: Miami Herald - Online, The

News Text: BRIDGEWATER, Va. -- The headwaters of the Potomac River rise amid the hills and hollows of George Washington National Forest in Virginia. Small creeks dart past oak, white pine and hickory, become streams that nourish farmland and towns, and create a river that courses through two states and the nation's capital.

About 4 million people depend on that water. For decades, the U.S. Forest Service identified preserving its purity as the top priority for the national forest. Now, the agency is considering allowing George Washington to become the first national forest to permit high-volume hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

The million-acre forest sits on the eastern edge of the Marcellus shale formation, whose vast deposits of natural gas have touched off a drilling bonanza in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

All across the country, fracking's risks and rewards have splintered communities. But the potential risk to George Washington National Forest's water has drawn widespread opposition, including from most of the towns and counties nearby, members of Virginia's congressional delegation and Washington's mayor.

The oil industry says any natural gas could be extracted with little harm to the national forest and its waters.

The dispute mirrors dozens around the country as hydraulic fracturing unlocks oil and gas previously considered out of reach. But this time, it has stirred concerns not only about water in rural communities, but also about the drinking water of one of the nation's biggest metropolitan areas.

"The Potomac is our exclusive water source. We don't have anywhere else to go for our drinking water if there's a mistake or problem," said George Hawkins, general manager of the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority. "And if there is, it would affect everyone at the (Environmental Protection Agency), every member of Congress."

Neighboring West Virginia offers a preview of disruption when water becomes unusable, even temporarily. In that case, chemicals used to wash coal were found in the Elk River two weeks ago. For at least four days, nine counties could use tap water only to flush toilets.

In Virginia, counties such as Augusta and Rockingham near George Washington National Forest boast some of the state's richest agricultural land, and many towns benefit from tourism tied to the forest.

"Local governments here are aware that their most important natural resource is their water," said Nancy Sorrells, a historian of the region and former Augusta County supervisor.

On a mild winter morning, Sorrells and two lawyers from the Southern Environmental Law Center drove the narrow road that snakes up to the nearly 4,400-foot Reddish Knob, one of the highest points in Virginia. On one side of the windy summit, hardwood forest extends to the horizon.

If fracking were allowed, Sorrells and the lawyers noted, huge trucks would navigate the sinuous roads into the mountainous terrain, forest land would be cleared for pipelines and hilltops would be flattened for compressor stations.

Every decade or so, all national forests develop new plans to determine the best use of their resources. The draft plan released in 2011 for the George Washington forest would have effectively banned fracking.

After an outcry from industry, the Forest Service decided to reconsider. Aware of the complexity and contentiousness of the issue, the agency has delayed a final decision several times.

Fracking currently is permitted on only two Forest Service preserves, both in the West: Dakota Prairie National Grasslands in North Dakota and Pawnee National Grassland in Colorado.

"Minerals have always been a part of what we've been about, but we have to weigh if it's appropriate to develop them in this forest with this set of conditions," said Ken Landgraf, planning staff officer for George Washington National Forest. "The 'why' of considering fracking gets to the use of national lands. If we are developing energy in this country and making it more secure, shouldn't national lands be part of the solution?"

Fracking involves injecting millions of gallons of water laced with sand and chemicals deep underground to crack shale formations and unlock oil and gas. The process is exempt from some parts of the Safe Drinking Water Act, and energy companies do not have to disclose the chemicals they use if they consider them trade secrets.

Technological advances would allow fracking in the forest while protecting its water, said Michael Ward, executive director of the Virginia Petroleum Council. He noted that the Forest Service could keep the most sensitive areas off-limits.

"Though there are no leases in or around the forest now, it seems unreasonable to lock up that whole area for another 15 years until the next forest plan," he said.



Fracking's effect on water supplies remains in dispute. Yet recent studies near fracking sites have discovered water contaminated by methane, arsenic and chemicals linked to infertility, birth defects and cancer.

Sarah Francisco, one of the Southern Environmental Law Center attorneys who rode up to Reddish Knob, said the possibility of fracking in the forest raised unsettling questions: Would the gas companies compete with municipalities for the forest's water? Once it has been used in fracking, how would the highly contaminated water be disposed of, since local treatment plants could not handle it? Would methane from wells migrate into the water, as it has in parts of Pennsylvania? Would accidental spills of chemicals or wastewater taint the watershed?

The questions trouble Dave and Sharon Horn. Half of their 650 acres is wooded and merges into the George Washington National Forest. They raise beef cattle on the rest. They hike and hunt in the forest. A spring runs on the other side of Buck Hill by their house.

Like many of the area's residents, Dave Horn's family has lived by the forest for generations. He does not want the land and water disturbed, and the oil industry has failed to reassure him.

"They can say, 'We'll be very careful and do this and that,' but there's always potential for human error, and that leads to contamination," he said. And that's what affects people downstream too.

News Headline: A call for toxic algae guidelines |  

Outlet Full Name: Toledo Blade - Online

News Text: It "really is unbelievable" there are no state and federal standards for routine detection of Lake Erie's poisonous algae inside municipal water-treatment plants, Ottawa County Sanitary Engineer Kelly Frey said at a forum Thursday.

"It's just so unusual for us to have to make judgment calls on something that is unregulated," Mr. Frey said at an event sponsored by the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council on Governments and attended by about 75 people.

Mr. Frey was one of four operators of water-treatment plants in the western Lake Erie region on the panel who expressed concern about the rising levels of phosphorus in Lake Erie and what that has done to help grow the lake's most prevalent form of algae, microcystis.

Classified as harmful blue-green algae, microcystis has a toxin called microcystin that is more potent than cyanide, Mr. Frey said.

The Blade learned in September, after Ohio had its first case of a municipal water-treatment plant forced into an emergency shutdown by the toxin — in Ottawa County's Carroll Township — that there are no laws at the state and federal levels that require plants to test for the algae's presence.

Mike Baker, chief of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's drinking and ground waters division, said at the time that the Kasich administration has no plans to require such testing. The U.S. EPA said it was taking months studying microcystin and 115 other substances in water to determine which, if any, need to be regulated.

Several treatment plants along Ohio's Lake Erie shoreline and its tributaries take it upon themselves to test voluntarily.

The toxin in microcystis killed 75 people in a kidney dialysis center in Brazil in 1996. But the science behind it is still emerging.

Only in recent years have scientists learned the toxin acts independently of the algae. It does not necessarily go away when the algae bloom fades, Andy McClure, administrator of Toledo's Collins Park Water Treatment Plant, said.

Some chemicals used inside water plants for taste and odor control, such as potassium permanganate, actually might help microscopic algae cells divide and give off more toxin, Mr. McClure said.

Each plant has its own strategy to neutralize the toxin. One of the more effective — but expensive — products is powdered activated carbon, which Mr. McClure described as “our magic bullet.”



But state and federal regulators have not developed a standard protocol to remove the toxin, instead leaving it up to plant operators. Some health experts wonder if the World Health Organization limit of 1.0 parts per billion of microcystin in drinking water is conservative enough.

“There is no set way to remove this. We're all experimenting with the processes we have,” Mr. Frey said. “We're all fearful of the threat this has if it gets through and into our public water supply.”

Barry LaRoy, Monroe director of water and wastewater, agreed.

“There are no regulations out there,” Mr. LaRoy said. “We're trying to do the best we can with the equipment we have.”

Toledo, which has spent \$3 million a year battling algae toxins in recent years, spent \$4 million in 2

News Headline: Begich speaks out against proposed Pebble Mine |  

Outlet Full Name: Seattle Post-Intelligencer

News Text: JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — U.S. Sen. Mark Begich has come out against the proposed Pebble Mine, calling the massive gold-and-copper project “the wrong mine in the wrong place for Alaska.”

In a statement released by his office Monday, Begich said he has long supported Alaska's mining industry and believes continued efforts must be made to support resource-development industries that help keep Alaska's economy strong. But he said “years of scientific study (have) proven the proposed Pebble Mine cannot be developed safely in the Bristol Bay watershed.”

“Thousands of Alaskans have weighed in on this issue, and I have listened to their concerns,” he said. “Pebble is not worth the risk.”

In 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency initiated a review of large-scale mining in the Bristol Bay region in response to concerns about the impact of the proposed Pebble Mine on fisheries. The agency released its final report last week, concluding that large-scale mining in the Bristol Bay watershed posed significant risks to salmon and Alaska Native cultures that rely on it. The region is home to a world-premier sockeye salmon fishery.

The report did not recommend any policy or regulatory decisions. But EPA regional administrator Dennis McLerran said it would serve as the scientific foundation for the agency's response to the tribes and others who petitioned EPA to use its authority under the Clean Water Act to protect Bristol Bay. Mine opponents have been pressing the agency to take steps to block or limit the project.

Begich, a Democrat, is the only member of the state's congressional delegation to outright oppose the project, and his position, first reported by the Anchorage Daily News, won praise from Pebble critics on Monday.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Rep. Don Young, both Republicans, last week expressed concerns that the EPA report could be used to pre-emptively veto the project, saying that would set a bad precedent.

"If the EPA has concerns about the impact of a project there is an appropriate time to raise them - after a permit application has been made, not before," Murkowski said in a release.



Under section 404c of the Clean Water Act, the EPA has the authority to restrict, prohibit, deny or withdraw use of an area as a disposal site for dredged or fill material if the discharge would have "unacceptable adverse" effects on things like municipal water supplies or fisheries, according to an EPA fact sheet. The agency says it has issued just over a dozen final veto actions since 1972.

Mike Heatwole, a spokesman for the Pebble Limited Partnership, the group behind the project, said Pebble is disappointed that Begich had "come out against thousands of new jobs, hundreds of millions in state revenue, and potentially billions in economic activity for Alaska."

Heatwole said in a statement that it is "no secret that there is a substantial difference of opinion regarding the science of EPA's recent Bristol Bay Assessment. Not many Alaskans think EPA is impartial."

He said there is a process that exists for evaluating a project, and there is no environmental harm in allowing Pebble to follow that permitting process.

Begich told The Associated Press that one of the complaints he hears from the mining industry is that it needs public input to apply for a permit before the permit process starts. He said a mining permit would need to be approved by the state before the permit process starts.

News Headline: Critics doubt value of International Space Station science |  

Outlet Full Name: Orlando Sentinel - Online

News Text: WASHINGTON ? After the White House decided recently to prolong the life of the International Space Station until 2024, the nation's top science official declared that the four-year extension would help NASA get a big return on its \$100 billion investment.

The station is "proving to be an amazingly flexible laboratory," said John Holdren, chief science adviser to President Barack Obama.

Yet despite his endorsement, critics ranging from space bloggers to official NASA watchdogs say the agency still has work to do before the station reaches its scientific potential.

"The old adage is that if you build it, they will come," said Keith Cowing, a former NASA space station payload manager who runs the popular website NASA Watch. "Well, it's there, but NASA has a lot of catching up to do in terms of fully utilizing the capability of the space station."

Billed as the "largest spacecraft ever built," the football-field-sized observatory began in 1998 with the launch of a bus-sized module from Russia. Since then, the station's two major partners ? the U.S. and Russia ? have steadily added pieces and equipment, along with contributions from Japan, Canada and Europe.

Astronauts have lived there continuously since 2000, but as recently as 2008 crew members were spending only about three hours a week on science. Now NASA officials say it's up to about 50 hours a week, due largely to the crew size doubling from three to six members in 2009. But about 15 percent of the U.S. racks for experiments onboard the station sat empty as of Dec. 31, and in a report issued last July, NASA's internal watchdog raised questions about the "real world" benefit of station science.

"A vast majority of the research activities conducted aboard the ISS have related to basic research as opposed to applied research," wrote investigators for NASA's inspector general.

It's the difference, they noted, between figuring out the biology of life in space and developing "more efficient materials" for products that could be used on Earth.

"While discoveries made as a result of basic research may eventually contribute to 'real world' applications, investors and for-profit companies may be reluctant to allocate funds to basic research ? especially when the likelihood of profitable results is unknown," the authors added.

Much of the research done so far on the station has focused on astronaut health, and that's partly by design. More than 200 space travelers have visited the station since 2000, and the steady flow has provided NASA scientists with plenty of test subjects to study risks to the body ? from muscle atrophy to vision problems.

In a recent speech, NASA Administrator Charlie Bolden said this kind of research would be necessary if NASA were ever to attempt a crewed mission to Mars.

"From a NASA perspective, the ISS is absolutely essential to the goals of sending humans to Mars in the 2030s," Bolden said.

But the focus on astronaut health also has exposed NASA to criticism about whether the station can benefit the 7 billion people living on Earth. Aware of this concern, NASA officials last year released a list of the top 10 research results that have stemmed from station experiments.

They include the development of treatments for osteoporosis to finding ways to monitor water quality from space ? an approach that has been tried by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"Two things that we really need to share with everyone are that the space station is up there with humans working on orbit and that it is bringing back concrete benefits for use here on Earth," wrote Julie Robinson, chief scientist for the station, in a blog post touting the facility's accomplishments.

In an interview, she added that there are plans to do more. "There is a real demand for doing the studies of rodents," Robinson said.

Not only are mice already desirable for testing new drugs, she said, but space has a way of suppressing the immune system ? which means drug companies can more effectively gauge how well their experimental treatments are working on infected rodents.

There are plans to blast 20 mice into space later this year, and Robinson said her long-term goal is to have "mice on every flight."

Another way NASA has tried to better use the station was hiring a nonprofit group in 2011 to manage the part of the station designated as a U.S. national laboratory and to entice non-NASA researchers to do their work there.



But the Florida-based group ? the Center for the Advancement of Science in Space, or CASIS ? had early management problems and was able to get its first sponsored payload onboard the station just this month.

A major obstacle is cost. The price of getting an experiment to the station can exceed \$250,000, and that has made many researchers wary ? even though CASIS often helps defray the expense with grants.

Another problem is interest. Although the microgravity environment is helpful for some experiments, such as crystal growth, CASIS executives said they are trying to educate other scientists ? including those in the field of Earth observation ? that the station can help them, too.

"We're at a time where we have to demonstrate the value of the asset," said Duane Ratliff, CASIS' chief operating officer. "We have to hurry up and really show the value."

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News Headline: Farmers Press Agribusiness Giants for Data Security |  

Outlet Full Name: Bloomberg Businessweek - Online

News Text: Don Villwock, a corn, wheat, and soybean grower in Indiana, stores farm records going back three decades on a computer that has no Internet connection. He's not a Luddite: Villwock worries that his sales and crop yield data might fall into the wrong hands and compromise his business. In this age of Big Data and massive customer information security breaches, that's not a casual concern.

At coffee shops and tractor dealerships across the Corn Belt, the debate about the collection and security of proprietary data has flared up in the last year as national and state farm bureaus push for the establishment of data use guidelines by companies. For years, farmers have shared crop yield and soil data with some of the world's largest agribusinesses to help develop technologies that make American farmers among the most productive on the planet. DuPont (DD), Monsanto (MON), and Deere (DE) have developed powerful software that can determine optimal seed spacing or more accurately predict local weather patterns. The flip side: Big ag companies could now control a data trove that presents privacy and business risks to farmers who don't want to share the secrets of their trade with rivals or the government.

"As farmers and ranchers, we often choose to exchange our information for access to products and services," Bob Stallman, the American Farm Bureau Federation president, said at the group's convention in mid-January. "More and more farmers are rightly concerned about who owns or controls all of the information they are sending back to the companies that provide the technology."

Farmers like Villwock say they worry that ag-related companies might misuse or accidentally release proprietary business information, exposing them to government auditors interested in scrutinizing their finances or environmental activists looking to protest fertilizer and pesticide use. "I am a little gun-shy," says Villwock, who farms 4,000 acres.

Monsanto, the world's largest seed producer, has spent more than \$1.1 billion to buy data-analytics businesses that help farmers micromanage their fields and stay ahead of weather changes. The company plans to charge \$10 an acre this year for its Precision Planting service, whose technology boosted corn yields by 5 bushels to 10 bushels an acre in field tests last year. Climate Corp., a startup Monsanto acquired in November, promises to increase yields by as much as 50 bushels an acre through the use of "hyperlocal" weather monitoring and predictive models. The two businesses could in time generate sales of \$20 billion a year, according to Monsanto executives.

Farmers say they're concerned they won't receive any compensation or benefit if data the companies are collecting are sold to others. The information may not be as valuable as some groups are making it out to be. Nor is it always accurate. Some farmers already share data with their grain brokers to help predict crop yields and grain prices. Real-time combine data predicted that 2013 corn yields would be revised upward to about 165 bushels, according to Daniel Basse, president and founder of AgResource, a Chicago-based farm research firm. Yet a U.S. Department of Agriculture report on Jan. 10 cut corn yield estimates to 158.8 bushels an acre.

"For the sake of individual data pieces, we are not going to trade in a relationship we spent 175 years building." —Deere's Cory Reed

Deere launched an online platform called MyJohnDeere in 2012 that lets farmers access, archive, and share information about their equipment, production data, and other aspects of their operations. It's also working with DuPont, Dow Chemical (DOW), and BASF (BAS:GR) to help farmers crunch real-time

data to optimize production in much the same way makers of everything from frozen pizza to pickup trucks do. There's a "tremendous opportunity" for farmers to use data to improve efficiency and productivity, says Cory Reed, senior vice president of Deere's Intelligent Solutions Group.

Farmers may not be as receptive to such pitches against the backdrop of recent corporate (Target (TGT)) and government (National Security Agency) security breaches. Last February the Environmental Protection Agency, which gathers farm and livestock information to monitor air and water quality, inadvertently released to environmental groups personal data on about 80,000 growers and ranchers, including names, addresses, and phone numbers.



The American Farm Bureau Federation, as well as state bureaus in Illinois and Missouri, have met with equipment, seed, and chemical companies in recent months to hammer out policies governing the use of information. They're asking companies to provide full disclosure of the data's intended use and give farmers multiple chances to opt in or out. Farmers are trying to sort through the "confusing" differences in agreements offered by companies, says Doug Yoder, a senior director at the Illinois Farm Bureau.

Deere and Monsanto executives say they recognize farmers own their data and stress they don't want to risk losing customers by jeopardizing their trust. "For the sake of individual data pieces, we are not going to trade in a relationship we spent 175 years building," Reed says.

The bottom line: Farmers are pressing agribusiness companies to devise policies to ensure their data are secure.

Singh is a reporter for Bloomberg News in Chicago.

Kaskey is a reporter for Bloomberg News in Houston.

News Headline: Fishermen, chefs, Cantwell tell Obama: Kill Bristol Bay mine |  

Outlet Full Name: Seattle Post-Intelligencer

News Text: Two forceful letters, one from Sen. Maria Cantwell and the other from 260 well-known chefs, are headed for the White House with a message for President Obama: Kill the proposed Pebble Mine near Alaska's Bristol Bay.

They are asking Obama to use the government's authority, under the Clean Water Act, to block a project that would impact a fishery worth half-a-billion dollars each year that directly supports 14,000 jobs.

Aerial view of site for giant proposed Pebble Mine near Bristol Bay in Alaska. Frying Pan Lake, pictured here, would disappear beneath a giant pile of tailings. Bristol Bay is one of the world's greatest fisheries.

Cantwell, restaurateur Tom Douglas, and a crowd of about 200 fisheries folk staged an anti-Pebble Mine rally at Fisherman's Terminal on Thursday.

Many Seattle-based fishing boats go north to Bristol Bay each summer. Nearly 1,000 Washingtonians hold commercial fishing permits in Bristol Bay.

A U.S. Environmental Protection Agency assessment, released Monday, found that between 24 and 94 miles of salmon producing streams would be damaged or destroyed — if the huge open-pit mine operates safely. Between 1,300 and 5,350 acres of wetlands would be impacted.

"Decisions on the future of this proposed mine should be made based on sound science," Cantwell wrote Obama. "Now, the science is in: The proposed Pebble Mine would have devastating and irreversible impacts on Bristol Bay salmon and our maritime economy which depends on them."

The huge open-pit copper and gold mine would be located close to headwaters of the Nuchagak and Kvichak Rivers, two of Bristol Bay's supreme salmon spawning streams.

Bristol Bay produces an estimated 46 percent of the world's sockeye salmon catch. From 2000 to 2009, an average 37.5 million salmon returned to its rivers, with an average annual catch of 25.7 million.

Alaska Rep. Don Young has never met a mine he didn't like, or an environmentalist that he did like.

Brett Hughes, first speaker at the Fisherman's Terminal rally, began: "I am a Bristol Bay salmon fisherman and my job depends on salmon returning to Bristol Bay."

The idea that a giant mine can coexist with the world's greatest salmon fishery, which depends on pure water, is "wild fantasy." I am being generous in describing it as fantasy," said Daniel Schindler, associate professor of fisheries and aquatic sciences at the University of Washington.

Tom Douglas, taking the lead on the restauranters' petition, ought to catch Obama's eye.

Douglas hosted the then-Illinois senator in 2006 at a Palace Kitchen fundraiser, and sent Obama off with a bottle of Woodward Canyon cabernet sauvignon — one of Washington's premier wines — and a coconut cream pie. Obama was apparently wowed by the wine.

The EPA assessment has galvanized opposition to the Pebble project.

Sen. Mark Begich, D-Alaska, a longtime advocate of the mining industry, has described it as the "wrong mine in the wrong place." A similar opinion came six years ago from the man he upset in 2008, longtime Republican Sen. Ted Stevens.

The Bristol Bay Regional Corp., a powerful native group, has declared its opposition. So has former Gov. Tony Knowles, as well as Bella Hammond, widow of former Republican Gov. Jay Hammond.

The mine proposal is being developed by the Pebble Partnership. It is owned by Northern Dynasty Minerals Ltd., a Canadian company. The giant, British-based Anglo-American mining company pulled out of the Pebble Partnership last year.

"We are disappointed that Senator Begich has come out against thousands of new jobs, hundreds of millions in state revenue and potentially billion in economic activity for Alaska," Pebble Partnership said in a statement this week.

Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, who has never met a mine he didn't like, has charged that the EPA is preempting Alaska's sovereignty and that the federal agency is "not listening to Alaskans."

But Begich said he has become convinced the mine "cannot be developed safely." The Bristol Bay fishery is already a big economic presence in the 49th State.

Cantwell outlined her concerns to Obama:

"The mine site would require the construction of a huge earthen dam, with some mining scenarios requiring that dam to be the world's largest. This dam would be used to contain toxic waste, including arsenic and copper.

"Soil properties in the region indicate that toxic tailings would leach into the groundwater creating even more impacts to the Bristol Bay ecosystem. Leaching of these chemicals is considered unavoidable and therefore the mine would require extensive water treatment in perpetuity which could cost exorbitant taxpayer dollars."

What would happen, she added, if an earthquake were to breach the dam and release mine tailings that would impact Bristol Bay “for thousands of years?”



The senator, the chefs and the fisheries interests are asking the Obama administration to file a notice of the “Proposed Determination” in the Federal Register under section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act, to prohibit or restrict development of the Pebble Mine.

The law gives EPA authority to act if science determines that a project would “have unacceptable adverse impacts on water quality and the fish stocks that depend on it.”

Ronald Reagan invoked Section 404(c) in protecting the Everglades.

Alaska's fisheries are “the envy of the world,” Tom Sunderland of Seattle-based Ocean Beauty Seafoods told Thursday's rally. “It's not just about the fish. It's about the fish and the people who depend on the fish.”

Categories: Alaska , Barack Obama , Economy , EPA , Environmental Protection Agency , Rep. Don _____

News Headline: N.J. waterways need protection from overdevelopment |  

Outlet Full Name: Asbury Park Press - Online

News Text: The recent passage of bill S-3107, which will again delay implementation of the Water Quality Management Plan, was another loss of protections to New Jerseyans interested in assuring we have safe water for drinking, swimming and fishing for many years to come.

When more than 70 percent of our waterways do not meet standards established by the EPA under the Clean Water Act, now should have been the time to institute plans that were drawn up in 2008.



Instead, Gov. Christie signed a measure that provides a second period of delay — a delay that will open vast tracts of environmentally sensitive lands to further development, increasing the burden on sewage treatment facilities and pollution of the water supply.

Failure to address the impact of the mechanisms of pollution with the quality management plans reminds me of the governor's veto of A-575, which would have prohibited the treatment and disposal of fracking waste in New Jersey. Here again, Christie seems to be verifying his May statement that he sees climate change as an esoteric question above his pay grade.

Water will become an increasingly valuable resource as we begin to prepare for the effects of global warming. Protections should be put in place today, and both these bills would have been a place to start. We should be burdening our legislators with appeals to override the veto, not our waterways with the waste from overdevelopment and the contaminants of industry practices.

Christine O'Rourke

Rumson _____

News Headline: Washington senator, chefs protest proposed Pebble Mine |  

Outlet Full Name: Miami Herald - Online, The

News Text: SEATTLE -- Eight days after the federal government declared that a proposed mine in Alaska's Bristol Bay would have a devastating effect on the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery, a Washington senator and 250 chefs and food professionals demanded that the Obama administration stop Pebble Mine.

Standing between docks 7 and 8 in the Seattle Fishermen's Terminal, Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., and chef Tom Douglas on Thursday denounced the controversial copper and gold mine proposed for the environmentally sensitive Bristol Bay and called on the administration to heed its own science.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Jan. 15 released a long-awaited scientific study of the proposed Pebble Mine, which would be the largest open-pit mine in North America. The report concluded that the mine could destroy up to 94 miles of streams where salmon spawn and migrate and up to 5,350 acres of wetlands, ponds and lakes.

"Now the science is in," Cantwell declared, with Douglas and fishermen at her side and working boats behind her. "Oil and water don't mix and neither do salmon and toxic mining pollution. After three years of study, it's clear. The proposed Pebble Mine would poison the headwaters of these important Bristol Bay salmon watersheds."

During the brief, chilly afternoon protest, Cantwell said she sent a letter to Obama urging that the mine be stopped. And she announced that Douglas and other restaurateurs and food professionals - including chefs Alice Waters, Mario Batali and Tom Colicchio - have also written to the president with the same demand.

The EPA's scientific study is simply that; it comes with no automatic action. But, under the Clean Water Act, the agency has the authority to prohibit, limit or restrict the disposal, discharge or long-term storage of mining waste into waters within the United States.

John Shively, chief executive of Pebble Limited Partnership, which is developing the mine, views the EPA's study as a purely "political document," which ignores the kind of modern engineering and mitigation measures that would have to be instituted to get the necessary permits.

In the days since the EPA released the study, the political response has been mixed.

Sen. Mark Begich, D-Alaska, has come out against the proposed mine, telling the Anchorage Daily News that it is the "wrong mine, wrong place, too big. Too many potential long-term impacts to a fishery that is pretty critical to that area but also to Alaska, to world markets."

In a statement released Monday, the Pebble Partnership said, "We are disappointed that Sen. Begich has come out against thousands of new jobs, hundreds of millions in state revenue, and potentially billions in economic activity for Alaska.

"We also are stunned that an Alaskan senator supports the EPA - a federal agency acting unilaterally - to make decisions about future development on state land in Alaska," the statement continued. "Finally, it is no secret that there is a substantial difference of opinion regarding the science of EPA's recent Bristol Bay Assessment. Not many Alaskans think EPA is impartial."

Alaska Gov. Sean Parnell has lambasted the EPA, calling the scientific study "little more than a pretext for an EPA veto of the state's permitting process. ... I will not trade one resource for another, and every permitting application - when filed - deserves scientific and public scrutiny based on facts, not hypotheticals."

Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Rep. Don Young, both Republicans, also faulted the EPA for its assessment of the Pebble Mine.



"EPA's assessment stops short of prohibiting responsible development in the Bristol Bay watershed, but the agency has strongly implied that this report will be a basis to preemptively veto economic opportunities in the region in the future," Murkowski said in a written statement. "I remain convinced that a preemptive veto of a mine or any other project, which the agency claims it can do under the Clean Water Act, would set a terrible precedent for development in our state and across the nation."

Said Young: "As I've said since the EPA embarked on this process, their involvement prior to the filing of a permit application makes a mockery of the statutory state and federal permitting process. This is a massive overreach by the EPA and an even bigger waste of federal dollars by an agency that has seen their budget reduced by over 20 percent since Republicans took control of the House in 2010. Spending millions of dollars performing unnecessary studies on fantasies begs for additional cost savings in their budget."

But on Thursday, Alannah Hurley of the United Tribes of Bristol Bay advocated action against the proposed mine before permits have been issued. Speaking at the Fishermen's Terminal during the afternoon protest, Hurley said that she is "tired of being held hostage by the cloud that this type of development has settled over our region."

"I am tired of watching my friends and family wonder, if this happens, how will we feed our children, how will our culture survive," she told the crowd. "The people of Bristol Bay are sick and tired of the uncertain fate of our watershed that has fed the hearts and souls of our people for thousands of years."

"That's why the time to act is now," she said. "The science is clear. The people have spoken. The Obama administration needs to do the right thing."

News Headline: Waste still seeps into pollution-plagued creek |  

Outlet Full Name: State - Online, The

News Text: ATLANTA — It was a problem decades in the making: raw sewage flowing into Proctor Creek, a tributary of the Chattahoochee River that winds through some of the most impoverished parts of Atlanta.

As often as 80 times a year, rainstorms caused the overburdened sewer systems to overflow downtown.

City leaders and residents alike cheered seven years ago when, under a federal decree, Atlanta officials completed a \$112 million project that untangled and rerouted the city's water and sewer lines to stop pollution in the Proctor Creek basin. It was a pivotal moment in righting one of Atlanta's most toxic wrongs.

There's just one problem: They missed some spots. Water quality testing has revealed a small but lingering amount of E. coli bacteria in Proctor Creek.

The finding has sent Department of Watershed Management workers back underground to find the sewer pipes that are still sending human waste to the waterway.

The ongoing problems at Proctor Creek highlight the complexity of fixing Atlanta's notoriously troubled water and sewer infrastructure, a system so neglected that it fell under federal oversight in the 1990s following a lawsuit by the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper.

This time around, the Riverkeeper watchdog group says it's sympathetic to Watershed's predicament.

"In a city like this, where you have 1,500 miles of sewer lines, it's not easy (to find all the pipes)," said Sally Bethea, head of the environmental nonprofit. "Underground, it's like spaghetti."

But some of those who live around Proctor Creek, which begins underground near the Georgia Dome and snakes west through neighborhoods including Vine City, English Avenue and Bankhead, aren't nearly as understanding.

Tony Torrence, an English Avenue resident and president of the Community Improvement Association, an environmental justice neighborhood group, is frustrated by the continued failures. This is just one of many water-related issues in his community as Proctor Creek remains plagued by other contaminants,

trash and flooding, he said.

"If you fixed the whole system, why do we still have problems?" said Torrence, who works with the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance on water quality testing in his community. "It leaves us at risk every day. We smell it. We breathe it. We live it."

Fixing the Proctor Creek problem was complex because residents there used to be served by a combined sewer system — a large pipe through which both stormwater and raw sewage flowed to a treatment center. But when it rained, stormwater overwhelmed the system, causing it to overflow sewage into the creek.

Under the federal decree, workers had to separate the stormwater and sewage into two separate pipes — a massive undertaking that required them to comb through thousands of underground connections.

"No one had mapped it. There are no good records," said Watershed Commissioner Jo Ann Macrina, who joined the department in 2011. "Even today we can't tell everyone where every pipe is. ... When houses were built, they connected wherever they wanted."

Engineers located and separated 970 connections when they first tried to fix the problem, she said.

But workers missed an unknown number of sewage pipes that are still carrying waste to Proctor Creek.

The first sign of trouble came when groups including the Chattahoochee River-keeper detected high levels of *E. coli* in the water. Watershed officials later conducted special tests with the EPA determining the fecal bacteria didn't come from animals, but humans.

Watershed has already located 28 sewage pipes still causing pollution in the Proctor Creek basin. Workers have repaired seven since beginning the search last September. They expect to find more.

"You can look back and say we should have found every single one of them," Macrina said. "As we are obligated to do, we will fix what we can find."

Macrina blames lack of sufficient video technology for not finding the some of the smallest of pipes, some just 4 inches wide. No one's entirely sure how workers missed a larger pipe connecting a school to the sewer system, but Macrina believes it was because work was performed in the summer when use of school toilets was down.

The city has spent \$88,000 so far to disconnect some of the missed pipes.

The amount of *E. coli* in Proctor Creek waters is nowhere near previous levels but remains in violation of water quality standards.

Bethea said while the creek runs to the Chattahoochee, the *E. coli* problem isn't likely a threat to drinking water pulled from the river 60 miles south of Atlanta. The biggest threat would be to people who come into contact with Proctor Creek's waters. Signs warning people to stay out of the nine-mile creek have been posted for years.

"It will impact the river, but it's most impactful in the community around (the Proctor basin)," Bethea said. "That's where the high levels have been creating a public health threat all these years."

What's less clear, though, is whether the missed pipes pose legal ramifications for the city.

Watershed officials say the failures aren't a black eye on the combined sewer overflow work already completed and signed off by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"What we certified was substantial completion," said Margaret Tanner, a Watershed deputy commissioner. "It's my firm belief they believed everything was completely done and what we're finding now is (minimal)."

The EPA is aware of the issue, a spokeswoman with the federal agency said in a statement.

The agency has not yet met with Watershed to discuss what implications the failures could have under the federal consent decree.

Atlanta received a 13-year extension in 2012 on its second federal decree, one governing sanitary sewer overflow system upgrades.

City officials pledge to get it right this time with the aid of smaller, better quality cameras and tools.

"We will continue because we want to make sure we don't miss anything," Macrina said. "The technology we had then was different than we have now."

The stakes are even higher as the Proctor Creek watershed is now the subject of a federally backed partnership between the EPA, city and private developers. Last year, the creek was added to the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, a distinction that brings special attention and the potential for federal grants from such agencies as the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



Separately, a private development group known as The Emerald Corridor is poised to revamp the creek in exchange for environmental credits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that it can sell to developers.

The Emerald Corridor is working with the nonprofit Trust for Public Land, a group raising money to build trails around the waterway that will connect Cobb County's PATH system to the Atlanta Beltline.

But for Torrence, talk of development is meaningless if the pollution problem isn't solved, and soon.

"The last three mayors said it would be fixed," Torrence said. "We can't wait."

Information from: The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, <http://www.ajc.com>

News Headline: Opponents of reservoir plan fault utility for operating behind closed doors |  

Outlet Full Name: NorthJersey.com

News Text: Opponents of a \$120 million plan to drain three Garret Mountain reservoirs blasted a public utility on Wednesday for lack of transparency in planning the project, which would dramatically affect the Great Falls Historic District and two cherished Passaic County parks.

Although the Passaic Valley Water Commission has been under a federal mandate since 2006 to replace its open-air reservoirs, the utility has never held a public meeting to explain the project to ratepayers or to the residents in Paterson, Clifton and Woodland Park who live on and around Garret Mountain and would be most affected by it.

Most of the discussions have taken place behind closed doors during the commission's monthly meeting in Clifton — which was attended Wednesday by three community activists who demanded that the public should know more.

Leading the charge was Bob Guarasci, executive director of the New Jersey Community Development Corp. in Paterson, who said ratepayers are responsible for the estimated \$120 million cost of the project but know little about what they're paying for.

"The ratepayers of this commission have been afforded little or no opportunity to provide input into this process," he said. Guarasci asked that "a series of public forums be held immediately."



The project is scheduled to begin this year with the draining of the Stanley M. Levine reservoir in Paterson, to be followed by the New Street and Great Notch reservoirs. Concrete tanks would be built to store the water, robbing Garret Mountain of much of its scenic beauty, opponents of the plan say.

The project — which has been opposed by Woodland Park and more than two dozen towns and cities served by the commission — is mandated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency through a rule it adopted in 2006 known as LT2. The rule requires all utilities that store treated drinking water in open-air reservoirs to either cover the water or build costly plants to re-treat the water.

But the rule is under federal review, and towns have asked the Water Commission to delay the project until that review is complete in 2016.

But the Water Commission has moved steadily forward, saying it has no choice but to comply with the federal mandate.

~~"I have my concerns about spending \$120 million myself," Commissioner Monaghan Bazian said Wednesday. "And there is a viable alternative, it would like cover it. But so can I have it seen."~~

News Headline: Proposed fracking in national forest meets broad opposition |  

Outlet Full Name: Chicago Tribune - Online

News Text: BRIDGEWATER, Va. — The headwaters of the Potomac River rise amid the hills and hollows of George Washington National Forest in Virginia. Small creeks dart past oak, white pine and hickory, become streams that nourish farmland and towns, and create a river that courses through two states and the nation's capital.

About 4 million people depend on that water. For decades, the U.S. Forest Service identified preserving its purity as the top priority for the national forest. Now, the agency is considering allowing George Washington to become the first national forest to permit high-volume hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

The million-acre forest sits on the eastern edge of the Marcellus shale formation, whose vast deposits of natural gas have touched off a drilling bonanza in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

All across the country, fracking's risks and rewards have splintered communities. But the potential risk to George Washington National Forest's water has drawn widespread opposition, including from most of the towns and counties nearby, members of Virginia's congressional delegation and Washington's mayor. The oil industry says any natural gas could be extracted with little harm to the national forest and its waters.

The dispute mirrors dozens around the country as hydraulic fracturing unlocks oil and gas previously considered out of reach. But this time, it has stirred concerns not only about water in rural communities, but also about the drinking water of one of the nation's biggest metropolitan areas.

"The Potomac is our exclusive water source. We don't have anywhere else to go for our drinking water if there's a mistake or problem," said George Hawkins, general manager of the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority. "And if there is, it would affect everyone at the [Environmental Protection Agency], every member of Congress."

Neighboring West Virginia offers a preview of disruption when water becomes unusable, even

temporarily. In that case, chemicals used to wash coal were found in the Elk River two weeks ago. For at least four days, nine counties could use tap water only to flush toilets.

In Virginia, counties such as Augusta and Rockingham near George Washington National Forest boast some of the state's richest agricultural land, and many towns benefit from tourism tied to the forest.

"Local governments here are aware that their most important natural resource is their water," said Nancy Sorrells, a historian of the region and former Augusta County supervisor.

On a mild winter morning, Sorrells and two lawyers from the Southern Environmental Law Center drove the narrow road that snakes up to the nearly 4,400-foot Reddish Knob, one of the highest points in Virginia. On one side of the windy summit, hardwood forest extends to the horizon.

If fracking were allowed, Sorrells and the lawyers noted, huge trucks would navigate the sinuous roads into the mountainous terrain, forest land would be cleared for pipelines and hilltops would be flattened for compressor stations.

Every decade or so, all national forests develop new plans to determine the best use of their resources. The draft plan released in 2011 for the George Washington forest would have effectively banned fracking.

After an outcry from industry, the Forest Service decided to reconsider. Aware of the complexity and contentiousness of the issue, the agency has delayed a final decision several times.

Fracking currently is permitted on only two Forest Service preserves, both in the West: Dakota Prairie National Grasslands in North Dakota and Pawnee National Grassland in Colorado.

"Minerals have always been a part of what we've been about, but we have to weigh if it's appropriate to develop them in this forest with this set of conditions," said Ken Landgraf, planning staff officer for George Washington National Forest. "The 'why' of considering fracking gets to the use of national lands. If we are developing energy in this country and making it more secure, shouldn't national lands be part of the solution?"

Fracking involves injecting millions of gallons of water laced with sand and chemicals deep underground to crack shale formations and unlock oil and gas. The process is exempt from some parts of the Safe Drinking Water Act, and energy companies do not have to disclose the chemicals they use if they consider them trade secrets.

Technological advances would allow fracking in the forest while protecting its water, said Michael Ward, executive director of the Virginia Petroleum Council. He noted that the Forest Service could keep the most sensitive areas off-limits.

"Though there are no leases in or around the forest now, it seems unreasonable to lock up that whole area for another 15 years until the next forest plan," he said.

Fracking's effect on water supplies remains in dispute. Yet recent studies near fracking sites have discovered water contaminated by methane, arsenic and chemicals linked to infertility, birth defects and cancer.

Sarah Francisco, one of the Southern Environmental Law Center attorneys who rode up to Reddish Knob, said the possibility of fracking in the forest raised unsettling questions: Would the gas companies compete with municipalities for the forest's water? Once it has been used in fracking, how would the highly contaminated water be disposed of, since local treatment plants could not handle it? Would methane from wells migrate into the water, as it has in parts of Pennsylvania? Would accidental spills of chemicals or wastewater taint the watershed?

The questions trouble Dave and Sharon Horn. Half of their 650 acres is wooded and merges into the George Washington National Forest. They raise beef cattle on the rest. They hike and hunt in the forest. A spring runs on the other side of Buck Hill by their house.

Like many of the area's residents, Dave Horn's family has lived by the forest for generations. He does not want the land and water disturbed, and the oil industry has failed to reassure him.

"They can say, 'We'll be very careful and do this and that,' but there's always potential for human error, and that leads to contamination," he said. "And all this will affect people downstream too."

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News Headline: Alaska Senator: Bristol Bay mine would "harm the salmon" |  

Outlet Full Name: Seattle Post-Intelligencer

News Text: Alaska Senator: Bristol Bay mine would "harm the salmon" Posted on Jan 14 23, 2014 | 10:00 AM
The new ad features an Iraq War veteran from Dillingham, Alaska, near the mine's footprint. The 30-second spot also has images from an improvised explosive device blast.
"That's the kind of mine I was up against for two tours in Iraq," veteran Random Reamey says in the new ad. "Here's the kind I'm fighting today -- Pebble mine."
Reamey continues, "I fought for my country overseas. I shouldn't have to fight a foreign company to protect my job here at home."
VoteVets, which campaigns on a variety of progressive issues, has been involved in collecting petitions against the Pebble mine. The new ad represents a stepping up of the group's efforts.
Also today, the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association has online banner ads in publications like Politico and the Anchorage Daily News.
That group began airing an ad today on Alaska television thanking Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska) for coming out against Pebble. He did so in statements over the weekend (Greenwire, Jan. 20).
"Sen. Begich is fighting to protect Alaska families and the 14,000 jobs that depend on Bristol Bay," said the 30-second spot.

News Headline: BRISTOL BAY: Ad compares mine to war |  

Outlet Full Name: E&E News PM

News Text: A series of online and television ads is kicking off the advocacy effort for U.S. EPA to intervene against the potential Pebble gold and copper mine in southwestern Alaska.

Last week, EPA released its long-awaited watershed assessment of the potential impact of large-scale mining in the Bristol Bay area (E&ENews PM, Jan. 15). It said a large mine would hurt what it called the world's top sockeye salmon fishery.

One of the new ads, by the group VoteVets.org, features an Iraq War veteran from Dillingham, Alaska, near the mine's footprint. The 30-second spot also has images from an improvised explosive device blast.

"That's the kind of mine I was up against for two tours in Iraq," veteran Random Reamey says in the new ad. "Here's the kind I'm fighting today -- Pebble mine."

Reamey continues, "I fought for my country overseas. I shouldn't have to fight a foreign company to protect my job here at home."

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"Sen. Begich is fighting to protect Alaska families and the 14,000 jobs that depend on Bristol Bay," said the 30-second spot.

The new ad has Alaska commercial fisherman Mike Friccero thanking Begich. Friccero also appeared in an ad by Pebble opponents last year, before Begich expressed a strong opinion on the mine.

In recent days, the Anchorage Daily News came out with a strong rebuke of Pebble. "If Pebble is developed, Alaskans will be trading some salmon for gold and copper," said an editorial.

"Yes, mitigation measures can reduce some risks and loss of habitat," the editorial added. "But the fact is that a massive open pit mining operation doesn't fit in some of the headwaters of the richest salmon fishery on Earth."

For its part, Pebble has called on regulators and the public to allow the mine to go through the permitting process. There is no on process, the company said in a statement this week, allowing Pebble into the

News Headline: Group plans ads thanking Begich for Pebble stance |  

Outlet Full Name: Anchorage Daily News - Online

News Text: JUNEAU, Alaska — A commercial fishermen's group is running TV ads thanking Sen. Mark Begich for his opposition to the proposed Pebble Mine.



Bob Waldrop is executive director of the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association.

He says ads will begin running Wednesday.

Waldrop calls the ad a "straight up thank you" for Begich's decision to speak out against Pebble. Waldrop says it's not a political ad and is intended to provide "positive reinforcement" for Begich's stance.

Begich announced his opposition to the project after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released a report concluding that large-scale mining in the Bristol Bay watershed poses significant risks salmon.

Critics of the EPA process worry the report will be used as the basis to pre-emptively veto the mine.

News Headline: Pressure on Pebble intensifies amid praise for Begich |  

Outlet Full Name: Anchorage Daily News - Online

News Text: A U.S. senator is leading an anti-Pebble rally, a veterans group is running anti-Pebble TV ads and a commercial fishermen's group is thanking a different senator, Mark Begich, for his opposition to the proposed Pebble Mine.

Bob Waldrop, executive director of the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association, says ads will begin running Wednesday as a "straight up thank you" for Begich's decision to speak out against Pebble. Waldrop says it's not a political ad and is intended to provide "positive reinforcement" for Begich's stance.

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Critics of the EPA process worry the report will be used as the basis to pre-emptively veto the mine.

Pebble Ltd. Partnership is working to develop a large gold and copper deposit that is at the headwaters of two salmon-producing rivers. Pebble chief Executive John Shively says the EPA study is flawed and that developers should be allowed to seek permits that require strict federal and state reviews. If the project can't meet government standards, it shouldn't be allowed, but it shouldn't be stopped before then, he says.

Another round of new ads comes from VoteVets.org, which says the mine threatens thousands of jobs, many of which are held by veterans. The group started its television campaign on Wednesday and says it is spending \$25,000 on a week's worth of ads in Alaska. The ads feature Random Reamey, an Iraq veteran and Alaskan from Dillingham who has fished commercially in Bristol Bay.

"I fought for my country overseas," he says in the TV spot. "I shouldn't have to fight a foreign company to protect my job here at home." The sole owner of the project is now Northern Dynasty Minerals, based in Vancouver, British Columbia. London-based Anglo American recently dropped out.

On Thursday in Seattle, U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell, a Democrat, plans to lead a rally of 100 fishermen, business leaders and a famed Seattle chef and restaurateur, Tom Douglas.



Cantwell's office said she will for the first time call directly on President Obama to stop a large mine in the Bristol Bay area, home to the most productive sockeye salmon fishery in the world. The fishery supports 6,000 fishing jobs in Washington, Oregon and California, her office says.

Pebble says that shows that many of the fishing jobs don't go to Alaskans.

"The Washington rally reinforces a key issue we have been discussing with stakeholders and that is the commercial fishing industry is an important economic engine for the region but most of the value quickly exits Alaska as evidenced by the fact that the majority of commercial drift permits are fished by people living outside of Alaska," Pebble says.

A 2013 report from the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska Anchorage found that 845 of the 1,850 driftnet permits in 2010 were held by Alaskans. With set nets included, Alaskans held just over half of the commercial salmon fishing permits in Bristol Bay, 1,474 of 2,777 permits.

Daily News reporter Lisa Demer and the Associated Press contributed to this story. Reach Lisa Demer at ldemer@sun.com or 937-257-1390.

News Headline: Scott pledges \$130M to Everglades restoration |  

Outlet Full Name: Miami Herald - Online, The

News Text: KISSIMMEE -- Gov. Rick Scott on Wednesday pledged \$130 million to Everglades restoration in the upcoming budget.

Scott said during a meeting of the Florida Cabinet that the 2014 budget request would be used to help restore the Kissimmee River north of the Everglades. It also will assist in the reconstruction of a section of the Tamiami Trail so it allows water to flow south into the Everglades and speed up construction of a storm water treatment plant for Martin and St. Lucie counties.

Referring to the Everglades, Scott called it "a key to a vibrant economy, coast to coast."

The budget request for the Everglades was a \$60 million increase over last year.

"If you're a fan of the Everglades, the governor's announcement today should blow your socks off," said Herschel Vinyard, the governor-appointed Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Scott's announcement comes nine months after the Florida Legislature approved an \$880 million plan for funding Everglades restoration projects. Scott negotiated the plan with the federal government.

Efforts to protect water quality for the Everglades has "turned a corner," said Stan Meiburg, acting regional administrator for the federal Environmental Protection Agency's for the southeast region. But

Meiburg said, "It's going to take time and it's going to be expensive."

The members of the Florida Cabinet are Attorney General Pam Bondi, Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater and Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam.

Lawmakers in the upcoming legislative session have a host of other water issues to consider besides the Everglades. Scott on Tuesday announced he would ask for \$55 million to restore and protect Florida's springs and central Florida lawmakers have pledged to fund efforts to clean up the Indian River Lagoon.

"Water funding is going to be a big, emerging issue," said Janet Bowman, director of legislative policy for The Nature Conservancy in Tallahassee.

At the first Cabinet meeting of the year, Scott and the Cabinet members handed out awards to business leaders and educators, and pledged their support for the Commissioner's efforts to fund the natural resources

News Headline: Tips to Help Kids Form Healthy Dental Habits |

Outlet Full Name: Capital - Online, The

News Text: (StatePoint) Oral care and cavity prevention are crucial for overall health, and getting kids to put that knowledge into practice is a must. With National Children's Dental Health Month occurring this February, it's a great time to motivate kids to take better care of their smiles with these top teeth tips:

Good Practices

The Partnership for Healthy Mouths, Healthy Lives recommends brushing your teeth for two minutes twice a day. If you aren't able to brush between meals, swishing water is a great way to help reduce bacteria that can build up.

When choosing toothpaste, look for the American Dental Association Seal of Acceptance to indicate it has been rigorously tested for cavity protection.

Take a minute to check what's inside your toothpaste. Many contain ingredients like artificial sweeteners, dyes or preservatives on the label. If you prefer a more natural option, Tom's of Maine makes the top-selling natural kids toothpaste without any artificial ingredients and no animal testing.

Encourage kids to make healthy nutritional choices that promote good dental health, including calcium-rich foods like yogurt, cheese, almonds, oatmeal, and oranges. While skipping all sweets may not be realistic, encourage kids to limit sugary beverages and candy, and to brush after treats.

Get Creative, Give Back

A new free downloadable coloring book called "Brushing Fun," is now available to help introduce kids to healthy habits. Each free download will trigger a donation of 10 tubes of Tom's of Maine Wicked Cool! natural toothpaste to Oral Health America (OHA), a non-profit dedicated to increasing access to oral health care, education and advocacy for all Americans. □ □ "Brushing can be fun and it's never too early to talk with your kids about their oral health, or too late to try to help shape healthy habits," says Susan Dewhirst, goodness programs manager at Tom's of Maine.

The coloring book, which can be personalized with a child's name, offers games, puzzles, tips and facts about oral care, as well as a story that encourages kids to appreciate nature. To show off your family's creativity, share a page from the coloring book using the hashtag #NaturalSmiles on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram for □ □ a chance to win a natural oral care gift pack and Utretch Art Store gift card. The free coloring book is available for download at www.TomsofMaine.com.

Go Natural

While you're caring for your teeth, don't forget to also take care of the earth. According to the EPA, by turning off the tap while you brush your teeth in the morning and before bedtime, you can save up to eight gallons of water! Parents and kids can also visit www.terracycle to learn how to recycle or upcycle toothpaste tubes.

It's simple to show kids that a healthy smile is an important component of overall health. These smart oral health habits can last a lifetime.

Antonio Bravo

Office of Wetlands, Oceans & Watersheds

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